

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 7, and 13 being independent.

Initially, Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication that the rejections based on U.S. Patent No. 5,004,643 to Caldwell have been withdrawn.

Claims 1, 5, 7 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,702,490 to Kneip et al. (hereinafter "Kneip") or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kneip.

Claims 2-4, 6, 8-10, and 12-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kneip. Applicant respectfully traverses all art rejections.

Applicant respectfully submits that the disclosure of Kneip fails to disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention, which provides methods of treating textiles to impart water resistance. The methods according to the presently claimed invention include the steps of applying a *pre-cured silicone emulsion* to the textile, wiping the textile to remove excess water released by said pre-cured silicone emulsion, and drying the textile.

Kneip discloses a process for treating leathers/skins with carboxyl-containing polysiloxanes in an aqueous emulsion, in order to impart water resistant properties in the leathers/skins. Kneip uses an emulsion containing polysiloxanes functionalized with side chains having spacer groups in the form of linear or branched alkylene groups having various substituents. Importantly, it is disclosed at col. 2, lines 1-5, that the spacer groups provide the "essential function" of providing "distance between the silicone polymer main chain and the reactive carboxyl groups" of the side chains. It is further disclosed at col. 2, lines 44-50, that the polysiloxanes are present as a *mixture of different forms*, including "chain polymers (generally main components of the mixtures), branched siloxanes, cyclic siloxanes and crosslinked siloxanes."

Applicant submits that the compounds disclosed in Kneip are not precured silicone emulsions. Kneip discloses reactive, primarily non-crosslinked silicone compounds. This is evidenced by the fact that the compounds of Kneip use spacers to prevent reactions from occurring between the reactive carboxyl groups and the silicone polymer chain, and that the composition disclosed in Kneip is primarily

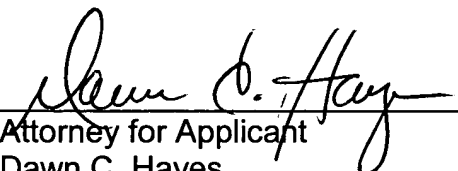
made up of chain polymers and other non-crosslinked siloxanes ("crosslinked" is often used as a synonym for "cured", see, for example, paragraph [0012] of Applicant's specification). These properties demonstrate that the compositions and methods of Kneip use a mixture of compounds, the majority of which are not pre-cured or crosslinked. Applicant teaches away from the use of uncured/non-crosslinked silicone compounds in her specification at paragraph [0002], as these compounds tend to cause undesirable discoloration of the leather product, even when heat curing is not performed.

Kneip does not disclose or suggest the methods of the presently claimed invention, and accordingly Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn.

Applicant submits that the presently claimed invention is allowable over the art of record, and respectfully requests issuance of a notice thereof.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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